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THE RAILROAD.

Facts and Suggestions for the People.

Geographically considered, the harbors of Norfolk, Virginia, or Hampton Roads, and New York, occupy the most important and commanding positions on the Atlantic coast of the United States. They are more convenient to the ocean than Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston, because they are not so far distant from the sea. And if I mistake not, the shortest Railroad route from Cincinnati to New York is about 300 miles. From Cincinnati to Norfolk, by way of the Chesapeake & O. R. R. route, through Virginia, is about 668 miles. In favor of the Virginia route, 132 miles, with grades much less than on any through Railroad north of this. The heaviest grade going east being but 294 feet to the mile, and the heaviest grade leading west being but 60 feet per mile, and but a few miles of the entire distance from the Ohio River to Norfolk, that the grade is thus heavy, while I believe there is no other through route from Cincinnati to the Atlantic seaboard but has grades of over 100 feet to the mile. This great difference in grade alone, gives this route a very great advantage over competing routes.

Then the Norfolk harbor presents great advantages, being large enough to accommodate shipping to afford transportation for all the surplus products and merchandise of the west and northwest, for ages to come, and it is the most central and convenient point on the entire Atlantic coast for distributing the same, north and south along the seaboard, and for sending the same to foreign markets. Then its depth of water and nearness to the sea is a further great advantage over harbors further north.

The Chesapeake Bay affords the finest harbors on the coast, and moreover, they are those farthest to the north on the Atlantic coast that are never obstructed by ice. It passes through the borders of Virginia and enters the sea between her capes. Just between those capes and under their shelter lie Hampton Roads and Lynn Haven Bay. To the south all the seaport towns, as far as the reefs of Florida, have their harbors obstructed by bars over which the larger vessels of commerce can never pass, and the extent of back country naturally tributary to them, is in comparison with that tributary to the seaport towns of Chesapeake Bay, very small.

To the north, the harbors are liable to obstructions by ice every winter, and their approaches are often endangered by the fogs which prevail in those latitudes.

Proper lines of internal improvements leading from tide water, Virginia, to the north-west, via the great Kanawha Valley, would make Norfolk a much better and cheaper seaport than New York, for Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Dakota, with portions also of Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Lieutenant Maury says, that "Pittsburg, Wheeling, Columbus and Toledo, with the whole States of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska, with the country to the south of them, are geographically nearer to the capes of Virginia than to Sandy Hook."

All this country that lies west of the Alleghany Mountains and north of Tennessee is now commercially tributary to New York, Philadelphia or Baltimore, rather than Norfolk. It has been made so by the railroads and canals which those cities have constructed from their wharves to the great valley and mountain slopes of the West.

Like works passing through Virginia into this magnificent mineral, manufacturing, and agricultural country, would secure to her seaport towns their natural advantages, line their wharves with merchandise and produce, and crowd their harbors with shipping, as they have done those of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and other cities, and would give to the west and northwest one more great thoroughfare to the seaboard, shorter, and no doubt, cheaper than any other railroad route in existence.

Norfolk, with its deep waters, spacious harbors and free outlet between the capes of Virginia to the sea, occupies, geographically, what the early discoverers thought would be, and what Physical Geography claims is, the most commanding commercial position along the whole Atlantic seaboard of the United States. Its natural advantages make it so.

Why, then, it may be asked have New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, each in a position less favored by nature, so far surpassed Norfolk in their commercial success? The answer is because they at an early day built railways and canals to connect them with the West.

(The most of the preceding is from Lieutenant F. Maury's preliminary report of the physical survey of Virginia.)

Now, we find capitalists have taken hold of the Virginia improvement, known as the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, and have the same completed into the mountains coming west, with a large force at work on the western end of it, leaving the Kanawha river at the mouth of Scary creek, 38 to 40 miles from the mouth of the Kanawha river, and reaching the Ohio river at Guyandotte, 40 miles below the mouth of the Kanawha, with a promise to the citizens of Gallipolis that if they will run a road from Gallipolis to a connection with the interior Railroads of Ohio, they will build their road down the Kanawha to its mouth or to Gallipolis. Gallipolis is situated between 3 and 4 miles below the mouth of the Kanawha river, in Ohio, on high banks, entirely above the highest flood ever known in the Ohio river. It is on the natural route for all travel from Washington city, Eastern Virginia, and the State of North Carolina, by way of the Kanawha Valley, to the west and northwest. It is one of the healthiest locations on the Ohio—it is surrounded on all sides, at a few miles distance, by inexhaustible beds of coal and iron, and only needs the aid of Railroads to the interior to deliver the coal, iron, timber and other products of the soil that lies back of it, to the river, to induce capital and enterprise to come in and start manufactures of different kinds. I notice by the statistical report of the Secretary of State of Ohio, for the year 1868, published in 1869, that this (Gallipolis) county has more acres of uncultivated land in it than is reported of any other county in the State, it having—

Lieutenant Maury says, that "Pittsburg, Wheeling, Columbus and Toledo, with the whole States of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska, with the country to the south of them, are geographically nearer to the capes of Virginia than to Sandy Hook."

Now, it may be asked, how is this, that while Gallia Co. is one of the first settled counties in the State, well located on the line of one of the most prominent natural thoroughfares from the Atlantic seaboard to the west and northwest, and southwest, in a good agricultural district, that there is so much uncultivated land in it, as compared with the other counties named above, or the unnamed counties that have still less. The answer is simple and plain—all the other counties have Railroads running through them, while here, at the county seat, during those times of the year that the river is obstructed by ice or low water, we cannot leave the place except by the slow mode of private conveyance. From the same cause people are deterred from buying and settling in this county, and there are seasons that for full half the year the river is so near dried or frozen up, that you can not move by water, nor by rail without going 25 miles to the Railroad Station. Then nearest if you wish to go west, or north, or southwest, you must first go 30 miles north on the Scioto, and Hocking Valley R. R. to Hamilton, then change to the Marietta & Cincinnati R. R., and go west to Loveland or Cincinnati, from either of which points you can proceed as you wish.

Our citizens, in connection with the citizens of McArthur, of Vinton county, have formed a company called the Gallipolis, McArthur & Columbus R. R. Co. They have secured a charter and will proceed at once to secure the right of way and open books for subscription, the object being to make the road from here to McArthur, in Vinton county; thence to Logan, in Hocking county, to a connection with the Columbus & Hocking Valley Railroad and there unite with said company or by some arrangement run over their road to Columbus.

With this road built, and in connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio R. R. to Norfolk, Virginia, I have not a doubt but we would have one of the best paying Railroads, for its length, in the State of Ohio, and the route is so good that it can be made at a moderate cost, and be a first class road when finished, and would no doubt work a great revolution in the whole business of this section, by bringing in population and capital, and by inducing the starting of machine shops, furnaces, and different kinds of manufactories. The location of Gallipolis, taking everything into the account, is one of the most favorable points on the Ohio river for a large manufacturing population. The great Kanawha river entering the Ohio just above it, and the Kanawha Valley being one of the richest coal and salt regions in America, and in Ohio the counties of Jackson, Vinton, Meigs, Hocking, Athens, Perry, back part of Gallia and Lawrence counties, abounding in iron ore, coal and salt, besides the immense amounts of agricultural products of the counties named, and of West Virginia, both above and below on the Ohio river, and all the Kanawha Valley, the most of which, with the contemplated road completed, would find a market in Gallipolis.

There are several daily steam packets running between this point, Kanawha, Salinas, Parkersburg, and the Pomeroy region, and give us this Railroad connection, and in a very short time we will have more than double the number, for the fact of the road being built would give such facilities for traveling that

people would be induced to visit different parts of the country, that without such facilities, seldom leave home, and hundreds would visit and pass through this section that now avoid it, because they look upon us as behind the age, in having no Railroad communication with any point. The Railroad will bring to the district through which it passes population; it will bring capital; it will bring the products of the back counties to the river; it will create a home demand for the products of the soil; it will give facilities for moving any and all kinds of produce, at any and all seasons of the year; it will create competition between the rival lines; it will, through this competition, make freights less; it will give to Southern Ohio, as well as the west and northwest, and their seaboard market at Norfolk, with another through line of Railroads to reach it, and to Washington City without going around by Baltimore, or the more eastern cities to reach it, and with a harbor never closed by the frost, king. It will induce large shipments of produce of all kinds from the west, and northwest, which would add to the work of the road here, and I fully believe that within 12 months, or less, from the completion of the Chesapeake & Ohio road to a connection with the roads of Ohio leading to the northwest, that the work on the road will be so heavy that they will be compelled to add a second track to their road, and that before 3 years from the time the road is finished, shall have passed, that the company will see a necessity for 4 tracks, 2 for freight and 2 for passengers.

I consider that the coal trade of this part of the country is yet in its infancy, but believe in a very few years there will be moving out of the Kanawha Valley, thousands if not millions of bushels of coal, where now there are hardly hundreds mined. Much of this, no doubt, would be brought out and taken on down the river in barges to the markets below, while there would, also, be immense quantities shipped to the west and northwest by rail. This may be looked upon as a wild fancy, and imaginative sketch, but have patience, and you will see it verified. Every day is bringing coal more and more into use, for domestic as well as manufacturing purposes, for Gas works, etc. Lower the price of transportation and you increase the consumption; lower the price of transportation and you stimulate competition. Competition will lead to reduction in freights—reduction in freights induces and compels economy in expenses.

Railroads running full trains each way can carry freight for much less rate per ton than when running with only part of loads. Low rates would materially increase the amounts to be shipped, both ways, which increase of itself would justify low rates, and yet yield a fair profit to the company. I believe with the contemplated road finished from Gallipolis to Logan, that coal can be brought from Hocking county to the river at Gallipolis, for a cost to the road of 60 to 75 cents per ton, and from Little Racoon to the River, at the same place, for a cost to the road of 35 to 40 cents per ton, or say, from Hocking county, freight cost the road from 24 to 3 cents per bushel. From Little Racoon, freight cost the road 14 and 14 cents per bushel—in both cases, to the river at Gallipolis. I think probably, in both the above cases, the estimate is above what it will cost the road, but the cost will depend much upon what amount of grade will have to be overcome. I think it will be light. An effort should be made to make the heaviest grade at most as light as that of the Chesapeake & Ohio R. R. going east—say not over 294 feet to the mile at any point, less if practicable. According to the Statistical Report of the Secretary of State for 1868, published in 1869, there was for the year 1867—

County	Tons of coal shipped	Value of coal shipped
Gallia	1,000	\$2,000
Meigs	1,000	\$2,000
Hocking	1,000	\$2,000

With the Railroad completed from this point (Gallipolis) to Logan, no doubt but large quantities of the iron and coal from these counties would pass over our road and find a market here.

Athens county mined in 1867, 4,923,060 bushels of coal. Perry county mined in 1867, 4,228,817 bushels of coal.

This road would run so close to the coalfields of those counties that I have no doubt but in time some of it will find its way over this road to the Ohio river. Let us have the contemplated Railroad as soon as practicable, and I have no doubt but much of the uncultivated land of this county will soon be brought under cultivation through the increase of population, and the stimulus that the Railroad would give to every branch of industry within the county, and on its entire line to Logan, in Hocking county. And I have not a doubt but the Agricultural products of the county will be more than doubled within two or three years from the day the first shovel full of dirt is moved in the construction of the road.

Neither have I a doubt but if it were once known that the building of this road to a connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad at this point, is a fixed fact, we will have enterprise and capital enough come to our city to have manufactures of different kinds ready to raise steam, and start their machinery by the time the road is ready to bring them the coal from the interior. From the location of Gallipolis, just opposite the foot of Gallipolis Island, it presents one of the best points for placing a Railroad bridge across the river from its head to its mouth—the banks on each side of the river being unusually high for river bottom lands, and the island being large, with a good foundation, would render its bridging easy as compared with most points. Now one and all, from the banks of the Ohio at this point, through Southern Ohio to Logan, in Hocking county, to a connection with the Columbus & Hocking Valley Railroad, are directly interested in the success of this enterprise. Get this under way, and let the Chesapeake & Ohio Company put a force on their road from the mouth of Scary down the Kanawha Valley to the mouth of the Kanawha river, and I believe you will soon find the Atlantic & Lake Erie Railroad Company from Pomeroy to Toledo, seeking a connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio road via this (Gallipolis) road, from Logan, or down along the Ohio river from Pomeroy, and very probably the Hillsborough & Cincinnati road would seek a connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio road at this point, via Picketon, Jackson, and a connection with our road about the Keystone Furnace, or possibly by running from Picketon south of Jackson and Keystone Furnace by an independent route, reach Gallipolis.

Now, what do you say, shall we make this road, and thereby secure the connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio road, and thereby materially benefit ourselves? Are you willing to put your shoulders to the wheel, and help lift this section out of the lethargy that has for so many years kept it bound down, while other points, with no greater natural advantages, but showing more energy, and unity of action, have been and still are taking the lead. And if we do not soon wake up at this end of the line we will be left entirely out in the cold. Let us unite our energies and our means, make one strong pull altogether, and success will crown our efforts, and from the day we succeed in securing a Railroad connection at this point, with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad to Norfolk, and with the Columbus & Hocking Valley Railroad, or some other road, leading west and northwest of us, a new era will dawn on this part of the county, and we will soon have one of the most prominent manufacturing cities on the Ohio, outside of Pittsburg and Cincinnati, and the products of the soil will soon be more than doubled. Strike while the iron is hot—the prospect is favorable—let us embrace it. Let us seize the opportunity it may be a long, very long time, before we

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have another so favorable. The citizens of this section had better give one third of all the real estate they own, in my opinion, than to let this present opportunity slip, and the balance be worth more money at the end of three years if the Railroad is secured, than the whole of it would be worth at the end of ten years without a Railroad. But you are not asked to give anything, but to subscribe every dollar possible for stock in the road and I believe it will prove to be a good dividend paying stock as an independent road, without a connection with any other Railroad at either end, and with the proposed connections, I have not a doubt but it will be one of the best dividend paying roads in the State, besides the advantages that would naturally follow the building of the road to the section through which it passes.

While speaking above of coal, reference should have been made to the quality of the coal in the Kanawha Valley. I have not at hand at this moment, the means of describing it fully, but its general character is said to be equal to that of any bituminous coal in America, for any and all purposes; some would add to be of very superior quality, and the quantity almost unlimited.

I consider that Gallia county is situated as if it was at the bottom of a large round basin, with its sides lined with wealth, and all that is needed for the citizens of said Gallia County to do, to avail themselves of a fair portion of it, is to be united in this Railroad movement. Oil the sides of the basin and you need have no fears, but you will reap a rich harvest. Again I ask you to strike while the iron is hot, or the advantages that are now within your reach may be diverted to other channels and pass around you.

W. H. LANGLEY.

GALLIPOLIS, May 10, 1870.

Since writing the foregoing, I notice, by the Cincinnati Commercial, of the 16th inst., that the citizens of Highland county, and of some of the counties adjoining it, had a Railroad meeting at Hillsborough on the 5th, when they organized a new Railroad Company called the Cincinnati, Gallipolis and Pomeroy Railroad Company, and appear determined to push their road through to this point with all the energy possible. This talk has the right ring to it.

Southern Ohio has lying dormant below the surface of the earth, millions and millions of wealth, the development of which, with the agricultural products of the soil, would soon make it one of the richest and most flourishing sections of the country, and to stimulate such development, we need cheap transportation facilities, and he who aids in creating these facilities, not only benefits himself but he has the proud and noble satisfaction of knowing that he is also benefiting his neighbor and the whole country. It is said that he who can produce by his energy and skill two grains of wheat where but one was produced before, is a public benefactor. So, he that creates or furnishes transportation facilities for moving freight from points of production, or from points where it is lying dormant for want of cheap transportation, to points of consumption, at probably one-tenth, one-eighth, or one-fourth the present cost of transportation, is a much greater benefactor of mankind, and is adding greatly to the available wealth of the country. And while the building of Railroads may for the moment appear burdensome, after once completed they will soon begin to lighten the burden and pay back the outlay in the general increase in the value of property, in the facilities they furnish for reaching distant markets with produce, in the cheapening freights, in time saved in freighting and traveling, and in the general development of all the resources of the country, which is sure to follow a decline in the cost of transportation, and shortening the time required to reach markets.

W. H. LANGLEY.